

Office of the Texas Governor | Greg Abbott

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Duties, Requirements & Powers

The governor of Texas is the chief executive of the state and is elected by the citizens every four years. The governor must be at least 30 years old and a resident of Texas for the five years immediately before the election.

The governor makes policy recommendations that lawmakers in both the state House and Senate chambers may sponsor and introduce as bills. The governor also appoints the Secretary of State, as well as members of boards and commissions who oversee the heads of state agencies and departments.

The constitutional and statutory duties of the Governor include:

- Signing or vetoing bills passed by the Legislature.
- Serving as commander-in-chief of the state's military forces.
- Convening special sessions of the Legislature for specific purposes.
- Delivering a report on the condition of the state to the Legislature at the beginning of each regular session.
- Estimating of the amounts of money required to be raised by taxation.
- Accounting for all public monies received and paid out by him and recommending a budget for the next two years.
- Granting reprieves and commutations of punishment and pardons upon the recommendation of the Board of Pardons and Paroles and revoking conditional pardons.
- Declaring special elections to fill vacancies in certain elected offices.
- Appointing qualified Texans to state offices that carry out the laws and direct the policies of state government. Some of these offices are filled by appointment only. Others are ordinarily elected by the people, but the governor must occasionally appoint individuals to fill vacancies. The

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KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL of TEXAS

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Duties & Responsibilities of the Office of the Attorney General

Attorney General Ken Paxton is the lawyer for the State of Texas and is charged by the Texas Constitution to:

- defend the laws and the Constitution of the State of Texas
- represent the State in litigation
- approve public bond issues

To fulfill these responsibilities, the Office of the Attorney General serves as legal counsel to all boards and agencies of state government, issues legal opinions when requested by the Governor, heads of state agencies and other officials and agencies as provided by Texas statutes, sits as an ex-officio member of state committees and commissions, and defends challenges to state laws and suits against both state agencies and individual employees of the State.

The Office of the Attorney General has taken on numerous other roles through the years. Texas statutes contain nearly 2000 references to the Attorney General. In addition to its constitutionally prescribed duties, the Office of the Attorney General files civil suits upon referral by other state agencies. In some circumstances, the Attorney General has original jurisdiction to prosecute violations of the law, but in most cases, criminal prosecutions by the Attorney General are initiated only upon the request of a local prosecutor.

Although the Attorney General is prohibited from offering legal advice or representing private individuals, he serves and protects the rights of all citizens of Texas through the activities of the various divisions of the agencies. Actions that benefit all citizens of this state include enforcement of health, safety and consumer regulations; educational outreach programs and protection of the rights of the elderly and disabled. The Attorney General is also charged with the collection of court-ordered child support and the administration of the Crime Victims' Compensation Fund.

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